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Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

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DIGITAL DETECTIVE

Police making full use of tech to nab absconding accused; in one such case Insta photo helps nab man on the run since 2016

PAGE 5

MIND THE GAP

BMRCL's partial rollback of fare hike fails to appease commuters, who are pointing to various lacunae in service provided

PAGE 7

This year just in the first month, 29 cases of 'zig-zag' riding recorded; city's motorists raise alarm over reckless behaviour of cutting lanes that has unleashed chaos

EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE

With high number of vehicles, it is difficult to crack down on offenders real-time

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Bengaluru's roads are witnessing a dangerous rise in 'lane surfing', a reckless driving trend where motorists zig-zag between lanes without signaling, often at high speeds. This chaotic maneuver is turning city streets into risk zones, endangering not just fellow motorists but also pedestrians, with a growing number of accidents and near-misses.

Traffic authorities have been cracking down on offenders, yet the numbers indicate that the issue remains a pressing concern. In 2022, a staggering 872 cases of zig-zag driving were reported. While the numbers dipped significantly in 2023 with only 83 recorded cases, they saw an alarming rise again in 2024 with 139 cases.

This year, even within the first month of 2025, 29 cases have already been booked for this hazardous violation.

Zig-zag driving is particularly prevalent among two-wheeler riders and young motorists eager to bypass traffic snarls. This reckless behaviour not only disrupts the flow of traffic but also leaves little room for reaction, increasing the likelihood of collisions. Many fatal accidents have been attributed to sudden lane changes without signaling, often catching other road users off guard.

> **"Zig-zag driving is a blatant disregard for traffic rules and the safety of others. It creates chaos on the roads and can lead to head-on collisions, and even multi-car pile-ups**
>
> —Traffic official

"Zig-zag driving is a blatant disregard for traffic rules and the safety of others," said a traffic police officer. "It creates chaos on the roads and can lead to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 »

BBMP elections

Endless wait for a date

As panel initiates discussions on Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill, activists fear this is just another postponement tactic

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The much-awaited BBMP elections continue to face delays, with fresh strategies being employed to push the process further. As the civic body nears five years without elected representatives, the postponement tactics remain unchanged. The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a petition related to the BBMP elections on February 25. Meanwhile, a 14-member joint legislative committee of the Karnataka Assembly, tasked with reviewing the Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill, 2024, has initiated public consultations on the formation of the Greater Bengaluru Authority.

Sources said that the committee had scheduled meetings in all eight zones of the BBMP from February 10 to 12 to gather public feedback. A seven-day objection period will follow, after which the committee intends to submit its report to the state government by February 21—before the Supreme Court hearing. These indicate that the state government may use this report to seek additional time from the court to further delay the elections.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Mughlai delights

Embark on a culinary journey through the bold flavors of the ancient Silk Road with a meticulously curated menu inspired by the rich traditions of the Northwest Frontier. **Where: Feast, Sheraton Grand Hotel Brigade Gateway When: February 17-28, 12.30 pm to 4 pm**

02 Sufi night

Immerse yourself in an evening of Sufi music with the legendary Mir Mukhtiyar Ali. Rooted in the Mirasi lineage of Rajasthan, Mukhtiyarji brings to life the timeless verses of Bulleh Shah, Kabir, Meerabai, and other mystic poets, creating a transcendent musical experience. **Where: Windmills; When: February 19, 8 pm**

03 Teddy bear show

Nexus Shantiniketan Mall presents an extraordinary Gift life-size Teddy Bear installation, offering the perfect photo opportunity for visitors. This enchanting display is part of the mall's Gifting Promotion Campaign. **Where: Nexus Shantiniketan Mall; When: Ongoing until February 28**

04 Poetic evening

Experience India's longest-running poetry event at Urban Solace. Recognized by the Limca Book of Records 2016, this soulful gathering has celebrated poetry for 14+ years. **Where: Urban Solace, Bengaluru; When: Feb 18, 7.30 pm to 9 pm**

05 Creative guidance

Get expert guidance at Istituto Marangoni to align your creative aspirations in fashion, design, and art with your next steps. Explore personalized initiatives designed for your success. **Where: Istituto Marangoni; When: February 20, 4 pm**

Public can send feedback on tree management manuals

Online platform opens for people to share comments and suggestions on 2 draft documents

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Draft manuals outline a course of action for the next 10 years on urban forest management and plantation activities

The Forest Department of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has decided to invite online suggestions and objections from citizens on its draft manuals prepared to ensure better management of trees in the city.

This is after a Bangalore Mirror article highlighted this concern raised by citizens during a public consultation meeting on Tuesday. "Considering the concerns raised by the citizens, we have decided to provide an online platform to the public to share comments and suggestions on the two draft manuals. We are expecting participation from a bigger crowd through the platform," said BLG Swamy, deputy conservator of forest, BBMP.

The meeting was held by the department to discuss and receive suggestions on a set of manuals developed by BBMP for the management and plantation of trees in the city - The Bengaluru Urban Tree Management Manual 2024 and Tree Planting Manual 2024.

The draft manuals outline a course of action for the next 10 years on urban forest management and plantation activities. While the Tree Management Manual outlines a course of action for urban forest management and has been developed to ensure regular monitoring and maintenance to protect the health of the tree and public safety, the Tree Plantation Manual provides a framework for tree planting in urban and peri-urban areas. The draft manuals are expected to ensure regular monitoring and maintenance to protect both heath of the tree and public safety in Bengaluru.

"The manuals will soon be available on BBMP's website for citizens to provide their feedback and suggestions. The comments can be sent to the Forest Department on Dcfbbmp12@gmail.com till February 28," Swamy said.

> **"Considering the concerns raised by the citizens, we have decided to provide an online platform to the public to share comments** – BLG Swamy

Notably, the civic agency had recently conducted feedback and suggestion sessions on the manuals at the Institute of Wood Science and Technology. However, many participants said that they could not provide suggestions and feedback as they were briefed on the content of the manual during the session. After incorporating relevant suggestions and feedback from the public, the manual will be tabled for approval from BBMP's Chief Commissioner.

Once approved, the documents will be reviewed within 30 days of submission by a committee comprising the Director, the officer heading the Working Plan Wing of the Karnataka Forest Department, and members of the Tree Expert Committee. Following the review, the drafts will be presented to the Urban Forest Council within 15 days, which must approve them within 45 days of submission. The plan will take effect immediately upon approval.

Stricter licencing system, defensive driving courses can help

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

head-on collisions, side-swipes, and even multi-car pile-ups," the officer added.

Zig-zag driving is said to often result from reckless driving, impatience, or road rage. Distractions like mobile phone use and impaired driving due to alcohol, drugs, or fatigue further contribute to the issue. Drivers may also weave to avoid potholes or obstacles. Speeding and overconfidence lead to misjudging gaps, while mechanical failures like brake or steering issues cause instability. Inexperienced drivers may struggle with smooth lane changes, increasing the risk of accidents.

Recently, a social media user pointed out the blatant disregard for traffic laws in Bengaluru. They noted that many violations, such as zig-zag driving, lane cutting without warning, left-side overtaking, and riding on footpaths, have become common. While not all traffic cops are the same, some see these violations as opportunities rather than enforcing strict discipline.

Similarly another user posted: "30-60 minutes to cover 6-km stretch is something that always touches my nerves in Bengaluru specially with rowdy Auto drivers cutting lanes every 2 mins and intolerable nonsense of zig zag driving bikes".

Difficulty in catching culprits

The high volume of vehicles on city's roads makes it difficult to track every instance of zig-zag driving in real-time. Moreover, offenders often escape penalties due to a lack of automated detection systems. While technology is gradually being integrated into traffic management, experts suggest that a stricter licencing system and defensive driving courses could help curb reckless habits from the outset.

"Zig-zag driving, often done by youngsters, disrupts traffic flow and endangers not only their own lives but also those of others. This reckless behaviour must be banned, but tracking offenders through CCTV is challenging due to limited manpower and numerous violations. Even when caught, some evade consequences using fake number plates. Until people fear the law, enforcement remains difficult. In India, many do not take the police seriously. Parents must also be held accountable, as even schoolchildren are now seen violating traffic rules," says Prof MN Sreehari, advisor to govt of Karnataka for traffic, transportation and infrastructure.

Sreehari explained that generally, every country follows strict lane discipline to ensure smooth traffic flow and road safety.

"Unfortunately, in many places, including here, a significant number of drivers lack awareness about proper lane usage and vehicle positioning. Many motorists do not consider the width of their vehicles when changing lanes or maneuvering in traffic, leading to congestion, unnecessary swerving, and even accidents," he said.

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Demand for Cauvery water heats up ahead of summer

BWSSB approves over 38,000 new connections, creating a demand for 100 MLD of water

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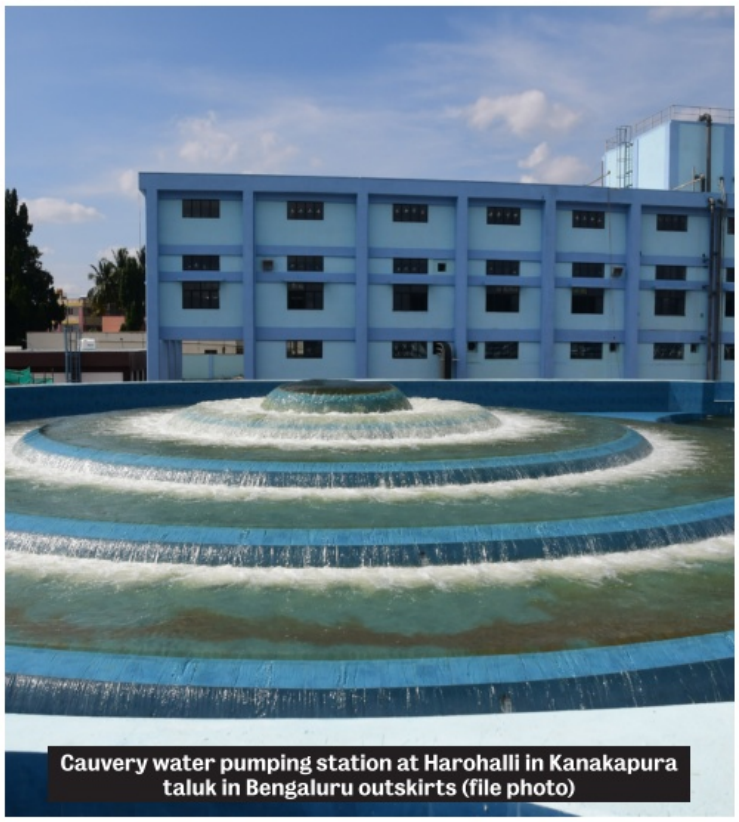
The demand for Cauvery water connections has surged as summer arrives. With last summer's drought leaving the city in a severe water crisis, Bengaluru residents are increasingly opting for Cauvery water connections prior to the upcoming summer months. In 2023, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) approved over 38,000 new connections, creating a demand for 100 MLD (Million Liters per Day) of water.



Cauvery water pumping station at Harohalli in Kanakapura taluk in Bengaluru outskirts (file photo)

100 MLD demand since February 2023

Last year, the water crisis lasted nearly four months, affecting lakhs of residents. Borewells across the city dried up, and private tanker operators charged exorbitant prices, adding to people's hardships. During this time, BWSSB efficiently managed its limited supply, prioritizing distribution and maintaining essential services. This has led to an increase in demand for Cauvery water connections. A BWSSB official said, "In 2024, BWSSB received over 58,000 applications for Cauvery water connections. Notably, 86% of these were submitted after May 2024. Around 8% of applications came from 110 villages under the BWSSB's jurisdiction. In 2023, 44,021 applications were submitted, out of which 30,344 connections were approved, generating a revenue of ₹587.86 crore." He said that in comparison to last year, the number of applications, approved connections, and revenue collection has significantly increased.

New connections

In 2024, BWSSB approved 38,013 new Cauvery water connections, generating a total revenue of ₹887.82 crore. Among the different zones, the East Zone received 12,421 applications, of which 8,267 connections were approved, contributing ₹303.12 crore in revenue. The West Zone recorded 18,512 applications, with 12,130 approvals, generating ₹178.89 crore. In the North Zone, 8,197 applications were submitted, leading to 5,341 approved connections and a revenue collection of ₹141.47 crore. Meanwhile, the South Zone witnessed the highest number of applications at 19,413, with 12,275 connections approved, bringing in ₹264.34 crore. Overall, BWSSB processed 58,543 applications across all zones.

Target to provide 1.5 Lakh connections by 2025

A BWSSB official said that under the Cauvery Phase V project, Bengaluru now has access to 775 MLD of water, which can support up to 4 lakh connections. The 38,013 connections approved in 2024 alone require around 100 MLD of water. Currently, 150 MLD is being supplied through the Cauvery Phase V project. As more connections are added, BWSSB assures that water supply will be adjusted accordingly, ensuring no shortage. According to sources from the water board, it also aims to provide 1.5 lakh new water connections by 2025.

Encouraging residents to switch to Cauvery water

BWSSB Chairman Dr Ram Prasad Manohar urged the public to maximise the use of Cauvery water to avoid dependence on borewells, which often dry up during droughts.

Jayanagar skywalk: 'Built for ads, not for pedestrians?'

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Residents of Jayanagar 3rd Block and surrounding areas want the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to ensure all the lifts at the skywalk near DR Bendre Circle are in working condition. They complain that one of the lifts has been defunct for quite some time, but the authorities or the agency assigned to maintain the skywalk does not bother to fix the problem.

"It is an important and busy junction in Jayanagar 3rd Block. The residents were happy when the skywalk was constructed under the public-private partnership (PPP) model. The skywalk looks beautiful, but the condition of one of the lifts is not up to the mark. It is quite shocking to see the lift remain closed for quite some time. I want the authorities concerned to ensure the agency fixes the problem as early as possible," said a resident on the condition of anonymity.

Expressing concern about the apathy of the BBMP and the private agency involved in the construction and maintenance of the skywalk, Kumar CN, a resident, said that he never comes across pedestrians using the skywalk. "The skywalk was constructed for the benefit of the private agency to exhibit advertisements. What is the use of the skywalk if the lifts are not functioning? I am of the opinion that there was no need to construct the skywalk at DR Bendre Circle," said Kumar.

The skywalk was constructed under the public-private partnership model. The concessionaire is M/s Prakash Arts Private Limited. The BBMP entered into an agreement with Prakash Arts Private Limited on February 13, 2015. The duration of the concession is 20 years, from April 18, 2017.

When informed, former corporator of Yediyur ward NR Ramesh said that he had already advised Srinath of Prakash Arts Private Limited to maintain the skywalk properly and repair the defunct lift without fail. "Srinath told me that he has already taken measures to fix the problems at the skywalk," said Ramesh.

Condition of the one of the lifts at the skywalk near D R Bendre Circle Jayanagar 3rd Block (Right) A defunct lift at the skywalk

Meanwhile, Srinath DS of Prakash Arts Private Limited said that he has taken measures to ensure cleanliness at the skywalk, but there is no safety for the security guard. "The skywalk has become a destination for students from a nearby college. Some students are found cutting cakes to celebrate their friends' birthdays. We have complained to Jayanagar Police, but nothing has been done to date," Srinath said.

He said that one of the lifts is under repair. "We have to get spare parts from Chennai for the defunct lift. We will ensure cleanliness and functioning of the lifts at the skywalk," he said.

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Rush hour

Richmond Road

Traffic is completely choked opposite the mosque, with no rules being followed. Despite repeated complaints, no action has been taken. The situation worsens during festivals

Walkway blocked

Cubbon Road

A tree fell last week inside the Defence Selection Centre South (Cubbon Road) compound, obstructing the Dickenson Road walkway. Previously, a fallen branch opposite Paakshala remained unattended for six months.

Dim paths

Kathriguppe

Walkers at Sorat Aswath Park near Kamakya Theatre, Kathriguppe, struggle after sunset due to poor lighting and a rodent infestation. Authorities must urgently install electric lights.

Son's Instagram post proves to be undoing of criminal on the run

As man absconding since 2016 tracked down, cops talk of ways digital footprint is helping nab slippery characters

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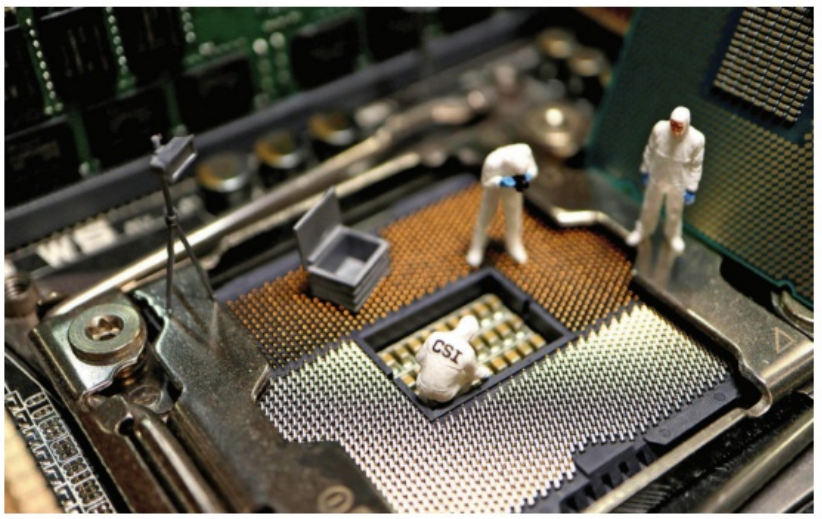

Probes rely on tech such as CCTV footage, GPS tracking, AI facial recognition

Technology has become an indispensable tool in tracking and apprehending absconding accused individuals it would seem as illustrated by the arrest of a man who has been on the run since 2016.

Madiwala Police arrested Mohammad Farooq after tracking him through a social media post by his son. As part of a special drive to apprehend absconding criminals, law enforcement agencies are increasingly relying on digital footprints, AI-powered surveillance, and data analytics.

Farooq, accused of attempted murder and assault with deadly weapons, had disappeared without a trace, leaving law enforcement with little to go on. Even when his father passed away, he did not attend the funeral, fearing arrest. His mobile number remained inactive, and he never used social media under his own identity. However, it was his son's Instagram activity that ultimately led to his downfall.

Digital footprint

Despite his efforts to remain hidden, Farooq's absence did not erase his digital footprint. Unaware of the ongoing police search, his son posted pictures on Instagram featuring his father. Although the post was later deleted, the police—who were actively monitoring online platforms for leads—came across the image and immediately began tracing the associated IP address.

According to officials, Farooq had been accused in a fatal assault case 12 years ago. A warrant was issued against him in 2015, but he absconded without appearing in court. To avoid detection, he refrained from using a mobile phone, making it difficult for multiple police teams assigned to track him down.

Farooq had since remarried and was living in Doddakallasandra. The breakthrough came when investigators found his photo on his son's Instagram account. By tracing the IP address, they identified a phone number linked to the internet access used for the post. This crucial lead helped pinpoint his location.

Upon further analysis, officers identified an area he frequently visited. Since the area was vast, police officials collaborated with Swiggy and Zomato to track food orders linked to the identified number. Using this data, they narrowed down his whereabouts. Discreetly monitoring his movements, they waited for the right opportunity to apprehend him.

"We could have arrested him at his house, but if we missed, he would have escaped again. So, we closely monitored his movements. Sometimes, suspects change routes or use fake number plates to evade capture. Through our observations, we learned that he regularly dropped off and picked up his son from school. Using this pattern, we apprehended him when he went to drop his son." Their patience was rewarded when they spotted him dropping his children off at school, leading to his arrest.

Caught online

One of the primary methods used by investigators is tracing the digital footprints left behind by absconding individuals. Every online interaction, be it a social media post, an email, or a financial transaction, can provide crucial leads. Cybercrime units track IP addresses, monitor suspicious online activities, and use digital forensics to analyse deleted or encrypted data.

Police officials attempted to use ChatGPT to determine whether a particular photo, IP address, or other details had been used across different social media platforms. However, this approach did not yield results.

Senior police officials told BM that technology plays a crucial role in solving different cases, with each case requiring a unique technological approach. While some investigations rely on CCTV footage, others leverage GPS tracking, AI-powered facial recognition, data analytics, and call detail records (CDR) to track down criminals. For instance, at Madiwala police station, a case involving an accused with 108 prior cases was solved entirely through CCTV evidence.

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Burglars ransack house in Electronic City

Thieves broke into the house of a private company employee in Electronic City and made away with cash and jewellery. The incident came to light on Thursday morning when neighbours noticed the house's door left open.

The victim, identified as Shanthakumar, a resident of Tunga Barangay, had traveled to Tamil Nadu with his family when the burglary took place. Taking advantage of their absence, the miscreants broke the lock, ransacked the house, and stole valuables before fleeing the scene.

Suspicious about the open door, neighbours immediately contacted Shanthakumar and alerted the police. Upon receiving the information, the Electronic City police, along with a dog squad and fingerprint experts, arrived at the scene and began their investigation.

Authorities have yet to determine the exact value of the stolen cash and jewelry, which will only be confirmed once Shanthakumar returns. Meanwhile, the police have registered a case and are analysing CCTV footage from nearby areas in an effort to track down the culprits. -BMB

Property dispute ends in murder

CRIME FILES

A long-standing property dispute between cousins turned fatal when Venugopal Reddy, a resident of Vittasandra near Bettadasanapura under Electronic City police station limits, was murdered on Sunday evening.

Venugopal, who was at home, received a call around 4 pm and left on his bike. He must have got just a kilometre away and it was half an hour since he left that his wife Jamuna received a disturbing call from his number, when an unidentified voice told her to come and see her husband, who was still alive. Rushing to the location, she found Venugopal's lifeless body abandoned at the spot.

Venugopal, married for eight years, lived with his mother, wife, and two young daughters. Tensions had been brewing for months between him and his uncle's children over a property worth crores of rupees. The dispute escalated into a physical altercation with his cousin, Radhakrishna, that evening. During the scuffle, Radhakrishna struck Venugopal on the head, causing him to collapse and die on the spot. The Electronic City police have registered a case of murder and arrested Radhakrishna.

Woman ends life over suspicion

A 26-year-old woman, Mallamma, allegedly took her own life in Bellandur, reportedly due to suspicions about her husband's behaviour.

Mallamma, who hailed from Raichur, was married to Basavaraju, a cab driver, for six years. The couple lived in Thimma Reddy Layout with their three children. According to sources, Mallamma had been troubled by doubts regarding her husband's conduct, which led to frequent disagreements between them.

On Thursday morning, in a moment of distress, she reportedly hanged herself from the iron fence of their sheet house. Neighbours alerted the authorities, and Bellandur police arrived at the scene to investigate the matter. The body was later sent for postmortem examination.

Following the incident, Mallamma's relatives traveled from Raichur and lodged a formal complaint, prompting the police to register a case. Authorities are now conducting further inquiries into the circumstances surrounding her death.

Indiranagar stabbing spree: Accused arrested

A man, identified as 23-year-old Kadamba, who is the accused in Indiranagar stabbing spree, was arrested on Saturday from Hoskote at 6 pm. Residents of Indiranagar were left in shock after the stabbing spree that left four people injured within half an hour on February 8. Among the victims, two were pani puri vendors. Three of the victims had lodged complaints with Indiranagar Police. According to the FIR, all three were stabbed for various trivial reasons. Indiranagar Police Inspector confirmed that a special team was formed to track the accused, leading to his arrest. A case has been registered under Sections 109 and 352 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023. Further investigation is underway. -BMB

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Road has turned dust bowl in Hosakerehalli

Stretch never restored after being demolished during lake rejuvenation work in 2022; it also gets trashed despite repeated clean-up efforts

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The battered one-kilometre stretch of Kerekodi Main Road in Hosakerehalli, with black spots and garbage scattered around, has become a nightmare for commuters and residents.

Locals say the condition has deteriorated over the last few months.

"Although the main road is always littered with garbage on the sides, it is rarely cleaned by the Bengaluru Solid Waste Management team. While people are littering the road in broad daylight, there is no one to stop them or penalise them. After approaching authorities on multiple occasions, locals have given up," said a resident of Hosakerehalli.

It was a well-tarred road up until December 2022 when the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike demolished it to rejuvenate Hosakerehalli Lake. Thereafter the stretch has not been restored, posing various issues to commuters and residents alike.

While it becomes a messy slush during the rainy season, dust arising due to traffic during dry weather is a cause of concern for many.

A glance at the stretch can show two-wheeler riders covering their nose with one hand while trying to navigate through the untarred road with stones jutting out.

Locals say the dilapidated road has made their lives miserable as they see no respite soon.

"Dust rising due to traffic is unbearable. We cannot walk on the stretch without covering our faces. It is dangerous for two-wheeler riders as they cover their nose with one hand while trying to manage their vehicle using the other hand. The road has stones jutting out making it risky for them as well as pedestrians. Nearly two months back, authorities sent a truck of stones to smoothen the surface. However, it has aggravated the dust issue," said Rachna Ravi Kiran, a resident of the area.

The spot that was completely littered in Kerekodi Main Road was cleaned up by evening (inset)

> **"We are regularly cleaning the garbage dumped along the Kerekodi Main Road. However, some citizens living in the area have been littering the place during night hours**
> –BSWML official

Some also highlight that many residents have been suffering from respiratory issues due to an increase in dust pollution over the last three years.

Earlier, Hosakerehalli had a group of citizens who were actively pursuing civic issues in the area.

Cleaned, but trashed again

When BM spoke to Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) officials, they clarified that although the stretch is being cleaned regularly, it is littered overnight.

"We are regularly cleaning the garbage dumped along the Kerekodi Main Road. However, some citizens living in the area have been littering the place during night hours. A large amount of garbage is dumped overnight and on a couple of occasions, we had to resort to earth movers to clean the black spot. BSWML has been requesting citizens to not litter the open space, but it has not stopped. The current garbage dump will be immediately cleaned," said the official.

Civic body under bureaucratic rule since 2020

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Administrative vacuum

"The tenure of the elected BBMP councillors ended on September 10, 2020. Since then, the civic body has been under bureaucratic rule, creating an unusual administrative precedent. Successive governments have cited various reasons to defer elections, with tacit support from legislators across BJP, Congress, and JD(S). Previously, the BBMP functioned under the Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act. However, during BS Yediyurappa's tenure as Chief Minister, a separate BBMP Act was enacted, increasing the number of wards from 198 to 243—triggering a fresh cycle of delays," said Avinash Kumar, an activist.

When the Congress government came to power in 2023, pressure mounted to conduct the elections. The government responded by reducing the number of wards from 243 to 225 through a fresh notification. Subsequently, a BBMP Reform Committee was reconstituted, proposing a new governance model, including a recommendation to split BBMP into multiple smaller municipal bodies. This was incorporated into the Greater Bengaluru Governance Bill.

Opposition and Legislative Review

"Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar introduced the bill in the Legislative Assembly in July 2024, but it faced strong opposition from rival parties. Consequently, a 14-member joint legislative committee was formed to review the bill. With the Supreme Court hearing on the elections approaching, the committee's renewed focus on the Greater Bengaluru Authority has raised suspicions that the government is setting the stage for further delays. The postponement strategy appears to be resurfacing yet again," Santosh Reddy, an activist added.

Political control over BBMP

MLAs cutting across party lines have consistently supported delaying the elections. The absence of elected councillors has allowed city MLAs and ministers to exercise greater control over BBMP's administration. Many legislators fear that once corporators are elected, their influence over the civic body will diminish, leading to deliberate election deferments.

Disregard for local governance

The election delay is being justified using ward reorganisation, reservation changes, and proposals for administrative restructuring. In 2006, the then-government merged 110 villages, seven town municipalities, and one city municipality with Bengaluru, forming the BBMP. Elections were subsequently delayed for three-and-a-half years. Except for the 2001 elections, every BBMP election has faced legal and administrative hurdles, postponing the formation of a local government. "With no end in sight, the establishment of a new elected council for BBMP remains uncertain. This persistent delay further erodes the principle of grassroots governance, leaving Bengaluru's civic administration in prolonged bureaucratic limbo," Avinash Kumar added.

When asked about vacancy, minister puts foot in mouth

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Animal Husbandry Minister K Venkatesh's comment that compounders are on par with veterinary doctors has invited much criticism from veterinarians and animal activists. Karnataka Veterinary Doctors Association has demanded Minister Venkaesh withdraw his comments.

It is alleged that Venkatesh, while addressing media persons in Haveri on Wednesday on the shortage of veterinary doctors and compounders, said that there was no difference in quality of treatment provided by veterinary doctors or compounders. The minister is said to have told reporters that the quality of the treatment would only depend on the person who treats animals.

The Karnataka Veterinary Doctors Association issued a statement on Thursday demanding the minister to withdraw his comment immediately. "We are shocked to come across such an irresponsible statement from the Animal Husbandry Minister. We never expected such a statement which is in poor taste. We have been working hard despite a shortage of manpower in the animal husbandry department. Instead of filling up vacancies, the minister is making comments on the quality of treatment given by veterinary doctors and compounders. We demand the minister to withdraw his statement immediately," said Dr Shivasharanappa G Yelagoda, President, Karnataka Veterinary Doctors Association.

There is a severe shortage of vets in several districts in the state

Dr Shivasharanappa said one has to pursue a doctor of veterinary medicine (DVM) for five-and-half years. "One has to pass SSLC to become a compounder and PUC to become a veterinary inspector. Their duty is to follow the instructions given by the veterinary doctor. They cannot provide treatment for animals that need treatment," he said, adding that shortage of manpower is severe in districts such as Raichur, Koppal, Bellari, Udupi, Mangaluru, Karwar, Bidar, and Kalburagi.

> **"What is the use of an animal husbandry minister who does not know the difference between veterinary doctors and compounders?**
> –Arun Prasad, animal activist

Expressing the similar opinion, Bengaluru Division Vice President Dr Lokesh SP said that the minister's statement is an embarrassment for veterinary doctors who have been working for the welfare of animals. "I demand the minister withdraw his comments on veterinary doctors," said Dr Lokesh.

Animal activist Arun Prasad demanded the minister resign immediately. "What is the use of an animal husbandry minister who does not know the difference between veterinary doctors and compounders or veterinary inspectors? There are around 2,000 vacancies in the animal husbandry department. Animals will suffer if Venkatesh continues as the animal husbandry minister," he said.

THE SUNDAY READ

Fare play, unfair ride

Partial roll-back fails to appease commuters

| Sridhar.Vivan
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

High metro prices continue to irk citizens, taking a toll on metro ridership.

Despite a partial roll back, many commuters are still unhappy over high metro fares. A protest was held in the city demanding roll back of fares. Sources said that while metro networks in other Indian cities are introducing commuter-friendly initiatives, the Bengaluru Metro has not made any significant efforts to enhance its services.

Commuters argue that if fares are increased, the quality of services should also be improved. However, issues such as inadequate parking, lack of discounts for students and senior citizens, and poor last-mile connectivity, continue to persist.

Other metro networks introduce commuter-friendly initiatives

Dinesh K, a regular commuter said that metro systems in cities like Chennai, Hyderabad, Kochi, Mumbai, Nagpur, and Delhi have implemented innovative schemes to attract more passengers. Citing the example of the Chennai Metro, he said, "In Chennai, every metro station provides separate bicycle rental services for men and women.

Ridership falls after fare hike

The recent fare hike implemented on February 9, 2025, has resulted in a noticeable decline in metro ridership. Prior to the hike, ridership remained consistently high, averaging around 867,000 boardings per day from February 5 to February 7. However, following the fare increase, a significant drop was observed, with ridership plunging to 623,123 on February 9, marking a sharp decrease compared to the previous week. A closer analysis of corresponding weekdays highlights the negative impact of the fare hike. On February 12, ridership stood at 637,884, a steep 26% decline from the 867,660 boardings recorded on February 5. Similarly, February 13 saw 7,51,251 boardings, down from 8,64,601 on February 6, reflecting a 13% drop. On February 14, ridership reached 7,63,250, still notably lower than the 8,70,687 recorded on February 7, marking a 12% decrease. The pattern suggests that the fare increase has led to a sustained reduction in commuter numbers, with many potentially shifting to alternative modes of transport.

Commuters can borrow a bicycle and return it within 24 hours. Additionally, passengers enjoy a 50% fare discount on Sundays and national holidays."

He said that the Hyderabad Metro has introduced a 'loyalty programme' that rewards passengers who travel more than 71 times a month, with gifts such as T-shirts and model train sets. There is also a facility of special metro passes for students, which allows 100 trips for ₹200 and 600 trips for ₹1,200, valid from July to March. The Kochi Metro too, has launched the 'Vidhya' pass for students, offering 56 trips over 45 days for ₹600. The metro can also be booked for birthday celebrations, photoshoots, and other events.

"Mumbai Metro's 'Mumbai-1' card provides a 25% discount for senior citizens, students, and persons with disabilities, valid for one month. Nagpur Metro has set up baby care centers at every station, while Delhi Metro has prioritized parking facilities to ensure convenience for commuters", he said.

Bengaluru Metro's shortcomings

Vanita Kashyap, a regular commuter opined that despite fare hikes, the Bengaluru Metro has failed to offer value-for-money services. She pointed out that most metro stations do not even have adequate parking, with spaces often insufficient for even 100 two-wheelers. As a result, commuters are forced to park on nearby roads. "Unlike other metro systems, the Bengaluru Metro does not offer any special discounts for students, senior citizens, or differently-abled passengers. Poor last-mile connectivity remains another major issue, making it difficult for passengers to reach their final destinations. This lack of facilities has led to growing frustration among commuters, who feel they are not getting quality service for the increased fares." she added.

> **Despite hiking fares, Bengaluru Metro has failed to offer value-for-money services. Most metro stations do not have adequate parking, with spaces often insufficient for even 100 two-wheelers so commuters are forced to park on roads**
> – Vanita Kashyap, Metro user

Slight fare reduction following public backlash

After widespread criticism from the public, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has recently reduced ticket prices. A maximum reduction of ₹10 has been applied in sections where fares had increased by more than 70%. While this brings some relief to daily commuters, the minimum fare remains at ₹10, and the maximum fare continues to be ₹90. The fare revision came after intense opposition from passengers. In response, BMRCL announced a reduction of up to 30% in certain sections, and the revised fares have been in effect since Friday. However, commuters argue that instead of minor fare reductions, the metro should focus on improving infrastructure and services.

MP Demands Rollback of Metro Fare Hike

Bengaluru MP PC Mohan has written to BMRCL's Managing Director, urging a complete rollback of the fare hike. He has also demanded that the fare revision committee's report be made public. Before the fare hike, the Bengaluru Metro saw an average daily ridership of 8.03 lakh passengers. Following the increase on February 10, the number of daily commuters has dropped to 7.48 lakh, indicating that the hike has discouraged many from using the metro.

FIR against ABVP members for protest

The Cottonpet police have registered an FIR against 16 activists of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) for staging a protest against the recent metro fare hike at Majestic Metro Station on Friday.

The demonstration, held in front of the station, saw ABVP activists raising slogans and demanding a rollback of the increased fares, citing the burden on students and daily commuters. The protest soon escalated into a heated argument with police officials, leading to the detention of several activists.

According to the police, the protesters had not obtained prior permission for the gathering, leading to their removal from the site. Following the incident, Cottonpet police filed an FIR against them.

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

ELEGANCE IN HARMONY

Amidst the tranquil waters, a graceful grey heron stands beside a serene flock of spot-billed pelicans—two worlds united in a silent ballet of trust, patience, and unspoken companionship, at Hoskote Lake

The picture and caption are by reader **Dr SS Suresh**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Pushed to oblivion: Library shelved in the digital age

No visitors in a day at Jeevanahalli facility despite restocking of all magazines, newspapers

Nestled in the heart of east Bengaluru, stands a small, faded public library. Though still in running condition, the quaint establishment in Jeevanahalli is cast aside due to the lack of technological advancements and urban developments.

Established in 1995 for the welfare of the residents of the east zone, it now stands desolate with hardly any visitors in a day. Though up to date with the restocking of the monthly magazines, the books in the library carry a blanket of dust on them.

When this correspondent visited the library, she got the glimpse of grimy, age-old newspapers tied together and stacked, lying dormant on the ceiling-mounted shelf. The library contains just four to five tables surrounded by chairs for visitors. It houses six to seven bookshelves, most of which are filled with language books. The paint wearing off the ceiling and a large cracked wall add to its worn-out appearance. Following the old government-office tradition, a register book is placed at the entrance of the doorway for the visitors to enter their information. Visitors, who are mostly senior citizens, can typically be seen reading the day's newspaper.

"Visiting this library since the late 90s, this library was a gem to the residents back then; it has lost its charm only in the past few years," said a resident of Jeevanahalli. Elaborating on his thoughts on the same, he commented, "The development of technology is why this generation does not search for a library if they need any information; they seek Google." Outside, stands a huge guava tree, with branches that slope and cover the signboard of the library. Activists suggest that the library requires modernisation in terms of digital facilities, architecture, and better visibility to cater to the needs of the tech-savvy generation while also preserving its historical and cultural heritage.

— Sandra S

Newspapers lying around in the Jeevanahalli library

"Technology is why this generation does not search for a library if they need any information; they seek Google

–Jeevanahalli resident

DID YOU KNOW?

A marble statue of a woman believed to be more than 2,000 years old was found abandoned in a garbage bag near the Greek city of Thessaloniki, police said on Wednesday.

A resident discovered the 80-centimetre (31-inch) headless statue beside a trash bin in Neoi Epivates, outside Greece's second-largest city. The man turned it over to local authorities, who contacted archaeologists to assess its significance.

Police said experts, following an initial evaluation, determined the piece dates to the Hellenistic era, a period roughly between 320 and 30 B.C. that was marked by a flourishing of art and culture following the conquests of Alexander the Great. The statue was sent for further examination by archaeologists. It will ultimately be handed over to the local antiquities authority for preservation and study. Police opened an investigation to determine who discarded the statue and briefly detained a man for questioning who was later released without charge.

—AP

GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

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Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

BUST FAKE NEWS WITH BANGALORE MIRROR

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Zepto did not offer full-scale delivery of Skoda cars

Social media users recently shared posts claiming the quick-commerce company Zepto has offered to deliver Skoda cars within 10 minutes following its partnership with Skoda India. The PTI Fact Check Desk investigated and found this claim false. Zepto confirmed to the Desk that it launched a campaign to generate curiosity around the Skoda Kushaq test drives. The campaign was not about vehicle delivery service.

Claim: On February 6, an X (formerly Twitter) user shared a post claiming that Zepto will deliver cars to your doorstep within 10 minutes after it partners with Skoda India Cars. The post's caption, read: "Big news! Skoda and Zepto are partnering to deliver cars in just 10 minutes."

Investigation: The Desk ran the viral image through Google Lens and found several other users shared it with a similar claim. Two such posts can be seen here and here, with their archive versions available here and here respectively. We first scanned Zepto's official handle and found an Instagram post dated February 4. The caption read: "Humare pass mixer hai, phone hai, tablet hai, aur abb... Coming soon on 8th Feb! #SkodaIndia #SkodaIndiaNewEra #LetsExplore." Skoda India shared the post on its official Instagram account.

The Desk conducted a customised keyword search on Google to find relevant media reports. It came across a report by HT Auto, dated February 6, whose headline read: "Test drive delivered in 10 minutes: Zepto to bring Skoda Kylaq straight to your doorstep."

Another report was also published by Outlook startup on February 10, whose headline read: "Zepto's 10-Min Skoda Test-Drive Delivery: Can Q-Commerce Deliver Products Like Cars?"

Here is the link to the report: The Desk also came across a LinkedIn post by Aadit Palicha, Co-Founder and CEO of Zepto, dated February 6, 2025. The post mentioned that they are not delivering cars in 10 minutes yet. "No, We're Not Delivering Cars in 10 Minutes... yet. We've seen the headlines—Skoda & Zepto delivering cars in 10 minutes?! We love the energy, but let's clear things up: you won't be ordering a Škoda Kylaq from the Zepto app (as tempting as that sounds). What you can get in 10 minutes? A test drive of the Škoda Kylaq for now :) But... who knows what the future holds?" wrote the CEO. Further, the Desk emailed the Zepto PR team, who clarified that the teaser was meant to generate curiosity around a test drive of the Skoda Kylaq for now, not a full-scale vehicle delivery. "Regarding your query on the latest Zepto X Skoda teaser campaign. To clarify, as Aadit Palicha, Co-founder & CEO of Zepto, shared on LinkedIn, Zepto is not delivering cars in 10 minutes. The teaser was meant to generate curiosity about a test drive of the Skoda Kylaq for now, not a full-scale delivery of vehicles," read the email response from the team.

The Desk concluded that Zepto would give a test drive from Skoda Kylaq and not deliver cars in 10 minutes.

CLAIM: Zepto will deliver cars in 10 minutes as it partners with Skoda.

FACT: Zepto partnered with Skoda to provide a test drive for now and not a full-scale delivery of vehicles.

CONCLUSION: Multiple social media users shared a post claiming that Zepto would deliver cars in 10 minutes after partnering with Skoda India. In its investigation, the Desk found that a teaser was meant to generate curiosity about a test drive, not a full-scale delivery of vehicles.

The story was originally published by PTInews.com (https://www.ptinews.com/fact-detail/No--Zepto-did-not-offer-full-scale-delivery-of-Skoda-cars%3B-campaign-designed-to-create-curiosity-around-test-drives-shared-with-false-claim/2294946) and republished by Bangalore Mirror as part of the Shakti Collective)

Neighbourhood IN FOCUS

Commuters demand skywalk near St. Charles High School

Traffic congestion causes concern for students in area that has at least 3 schools, as many struggle to cross road right after busy flyover; signal has stopped working too

Daily traffic congestion near St. Charles High School on Hennur Main Road has become a major concern for students, commuters, parents, and residents. Heavy vehicle movement and speeding traffic make it difficult for students crossing the road. Locals are urging authorities to take immediate action to improve pedestrian safety.

Scenes from the busy road on a school day

Lack of crossing facilities puts students at risk, say locals

The road is flanked by three schools with similar dispersal times, further worsening the situation. Without a pedestrian signal or zebra crossing, hundreds of students struggle to cross the busy stretch every morning and afternoon. With vehicles rarely slowing down, parents remain deeply concerned about their children's safety.

"Crossing this road is extremely dangerous for children. There is no proper pedestrian crossing, and vehicles speed past without stopping. A traffic signal was installed a few months ago, but it stopped working. A skywalk is the only solution to prevent accidents," said Ramya, a mother of a fifth-grader.

Traffic bottlenecks and growing frustration

Commuters frequently face gridlocks as pedestrians struggle to find a safe way to cross. "Traffic gets blocked because students and parents stand in the middle of the road, trying to cross. A skywalk would improve traffic flow and ensure pedestrian safety," said Suresh, a daily commuter.

Lingarajapuram residents and office-goers share similar concerns, pointing out that the lack of a pedestrian crossing forces people to take risks, often leading to traffic slowdowns. "I get stuck in a jam here almost every day because of people crossing the road. If the government builds a skywalk, it will ease movement for both vehicles and pedestrians," said Deepak, a software engineer who regularly commutes through the area.

TODAY: TOWNS AREA

Pressure on authorities increases

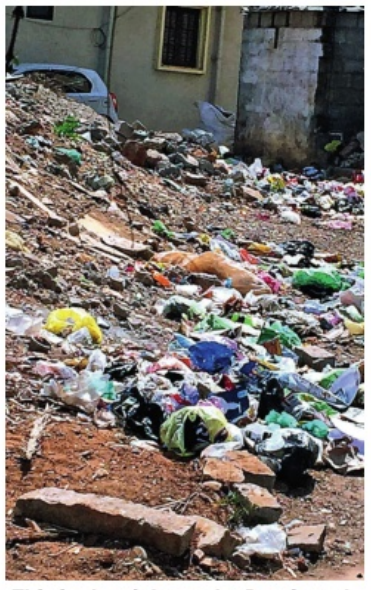
As the situation worsens, parents and residents have launched a petition urging the traffic police and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to construct a skywalk.

Some locals have also suggested installing speed breakers and zebra crossings to enhance pedestrian safety.

Despite multiple appeals, authorities have yet to take concrete action. However, with growing public pressure, residents remain hopeful that a skywalk will soon be built to protect schoolchildren and improve traffic flow in the area.

–Sandra S

Bus stand turns debris stop


This is the sight at the Bus Stand Road Cross in Dodda Banaswadi

Bus stands are places that need to be kept clean, as people wait there for long periods. However, in Dodda Banaswadi, the bus stand road has turned into a dumping yard. A BM reader said, "We are suffering from a debris menace. The Bus Stand Road Cross at Dodda Banaswadi is littered with dirt and waste, causing a stink and becoming a breeding ground for rats, flies, and mosquitoes. This is creating serious problems for residents. We wonder if the BBMP will ever take action."

Sudarshan D, a resident, said, "The litter accumulation on Bus Stand Road is intolerable. It's not just an eyesore but a serious health hazard. The foul smell and the surge of pests like rats and mosquitoes put our well-being at risk. We urge the BBMP to take immediate action to clean up this mess and ensure our neighbourhood remains clean and safe. The current situation on Bus Stand Road is alarming from a public health perspective. Accumulated debris not only attracts pests but also poses significant health risks, including the spread of diseases. It is imperative that the BBMP addresses this issue promptly to safeguard the well-being of the community."

Residents say it is high time the BBMP steps in to clear the debris, as it is their duty to ensure foolproof door-to-door waste collection and eliminate black spots. Nitin Naidu, a resident, said, "As responsible citizens, we expect the BBMP to uphold cleanliness standards in our locality. The debris menace on Bus Stand Road reflects poorly on their commitment to maintaining public infrastructure. It's time for them to fulfil their duty and take decisive action to resolve this issue." Local businesses are also feeling the impact. "The unsightly condition of Bus Stand Road is driving customers away. No one wants to navigate through piles of garbage to reach shops or eateries. If the BBMP doesn't intervene soon, it could spell financial disaster for entrepreneurs in this area," said Kumarappa, a small business owner.

Beyond the health risks, the debris accumulation is also harming the environment. It is contaminating soil and water sources, and disrupting local ecosystems. "We need swift action to mitigate these environmental impacts. Addressing the debris menace requires a collective effort from both the authorities and the community. While the BBMP must lead cleanup efforts and enforce regulations, residents also play a crucial role in maintaining cleanliness. Let's work together to reclaim Bus Stand Road," said Rajesh Kumar, a local resident.

–Prakash VL

Monkeypox: Free treatment

The Karnataka government has declared free treatment for all persons affected with the monkeypox disease.

Earlier, the free treatment facility was only for the Below Poverty Line (BPL) cardholders. The monkeypox or Monkey fever is also known as Kyasanur Forest Disease (KFD). State Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said: "Our government is making every effort to control KFD, which is spreading extensively in the Malenadu (hilly) region. Treatment for those affected by the disease is being provided free of cost, and this benefit has now been extended to APL (Above Poverty Line) families as well."

"Members of APL families affected by KFD in the state will receive free treatment at hospitals registered under the Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust. This initiative will benefit hundreds of families," he stated. "Our government has taken a decisive step against monkey fever and has held discussions with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)," he emphasised.

A Plan: Train to airport

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Saturday said that, in addition to road, metro rail, and suburban railway services provided by the state government, his ministry will also introduce a train travel option from Kempegowda International Airport to Bengaluru city.

However, he noted that a few technical challenges need to be addressed before this can be implemented and the Railway team is working on resolving them.

Addressing reporters, he said that people currently have access to Bengaluru airport via Metro Rail, road, and the suburban railway project managed by the Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) (K-RIDE).

K-RIDE is, a joint venture between the Centre and the state.

Ex-Goa MLA dies after row

A minor altercation over a vehicle brushing incident led to the tragic death of former Goa MLA Lavoo Mamledar (69) in Belagavi. The incident occurred in front of Srinivas Lodge in the Khadebazar area. According to reports, Mamledar, a former MLA from Ponda constituency, Goa, was traveling by car towards Srinivas Lodge when his vehicle slightly touched an auto-rickshaw near Khadebazar, Belagavi. This led to a heated argument between the auto driver and the former legislator, escalating into a physical assault on Mamledar.

Following the attack, Mamledar attempted to climb the stairs to his lodge room but suddenly collapsed and lost consciousness. The hotel staff rushed him to hospital where he died without responding to treatment. The entire sequence was captured on the CCTV cameras of the lodge. Belagavi's Market Police Station have taken the accused auto driver into custody.

HEALTH TIP: Black beans are a great source of resistant starch that feeds the healthy bacteria in your gut

Having a handful of almonds daily will aid in weight loss and higher fat metabolism

BangaloreMirror | 10
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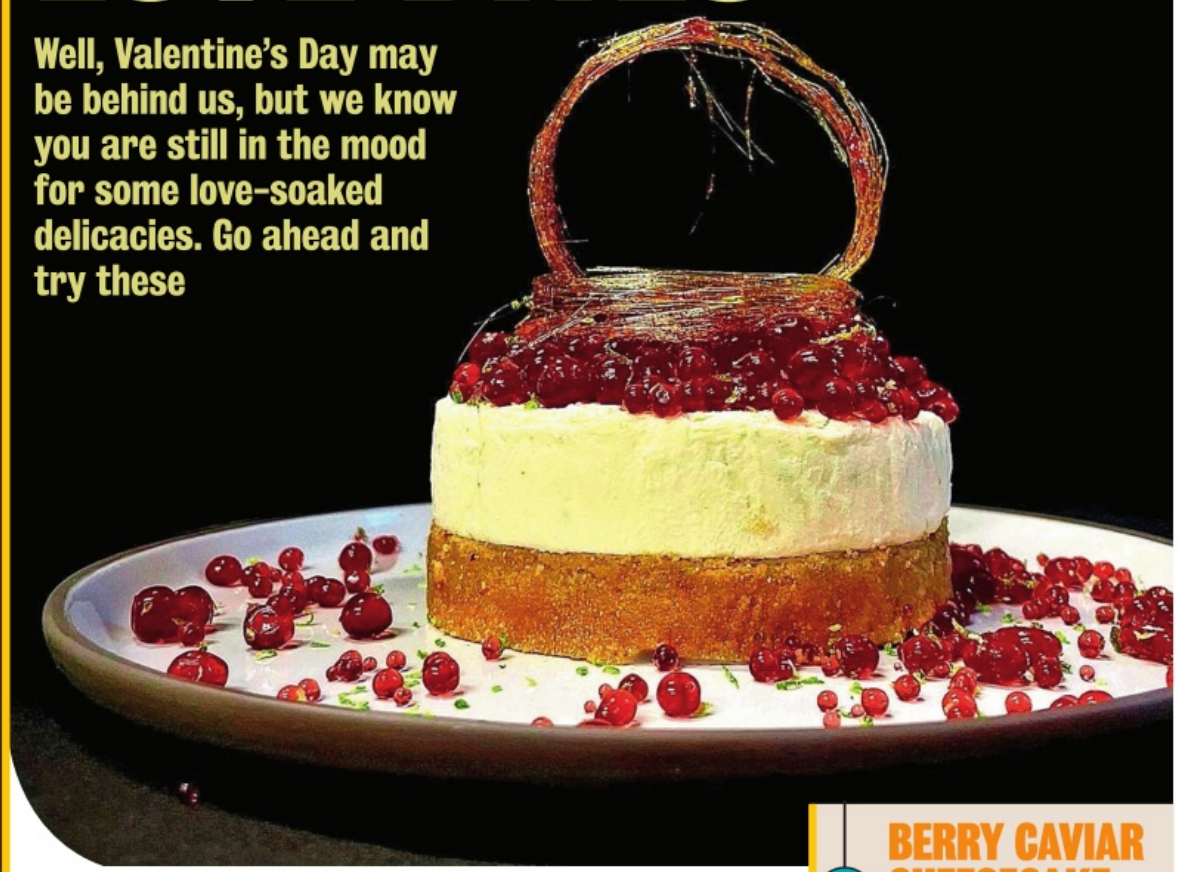
LOVE BITES

Well, Valentine's Day may be behind us, but we know you are still in the mood for some love-soaked delicacies. Go ahead and try these



FRUIT POSSET

INGREDIENTS
- Heavy cream: 480ml (2 cups)
- Granulated sugar: 133g
- Lemon zest: 1½ tablespoons
- Lemon juice: 90g (from 2 lemons)
- Fresh fruits: 1½ cups (raspberries, blueberries, or mixed berries)

METHOD
- Prepare a 2-cup glass measuring cup and six small ramekins or dessert cups.
- In a medium saucepan, combine cream, sugar, and lemon zest. Bring to a boil over medium heat.
- Simmer for 8-12 minutes, stirring frequently until mixture reduces to exactly 2 cups. Monitor by checking with measuring cup periodically.
- Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice. Let cool for 20 minutes.
- Strain mixture through a fine-mesh strainer into a bowl.
- Divide evenly among prepared ramekins.
- Refrigerate uncovered for minimum 3 hours.
- Cover with plastic wrap and chill for up to 2 days.
- Serve topped with fresh berries of choice.

Chef's Note: For perfect consistency, ensure the cream mixture reduces to exactly 2 cups during simmering.

Recipes from Chef Varad Kotnala, Executive Sous Chef, The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore

BERRY CAVIAR CHEESECAKE

INGREDIENTS
For the Base
- Plain biscuits: 200g
- Unsalted butter (melted): 120g

For the Filling:
- Cream cheese (softened): 500g
- Plain flour: 2 tbsp
- Vanilla extract: 1 tsp
- Sour cream (full fat): 125g
- Caster sugar: 300g
- Lemon zest: 1 lemon
- Large eggs (room temperature): 3

For Toppings:
- Berry caviar
- Caramel nest

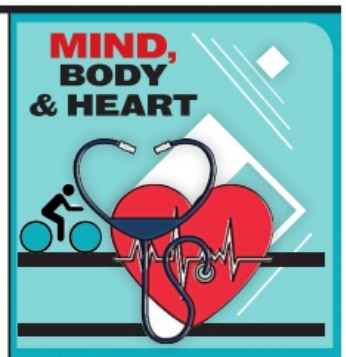
METHOD
- Preheat oven to 160°C/320°F (140°C fan). Prepare a 20cm springform tin with parchment paper.
- For the base: Process biscuits until fine, combine with melted butter, press into tin.
- For the filling: Beat cream cheese until smooth. Gradually incorporate flour, vanilla, sour cream, sugar, and lemon zest. Add eggs one at a time, mixing until just combined.
- Pour filling over base and bake for 55 minutes until light golden and slightly jiggly.
- Cool in oven with door ajar, then refrigerate for minimum 4 hours.
- Garnish with berry caviar and caramel nest before serving.

RASPBERRY BONBONS

INGREDIENTS
- 250g – white chocolate
- Edible pink and white color – as needed
- 100g – fresh raspberries
- 20g – sugar
- 10g – liquid glucose
- 2g – corn flour

METHOD
- Melt the white chocolate over a double boiler. Once melted, divide the chocolate into two portions.
- Add red food coloring to one portion to create the pink chocolate. In the other portion, add white food coloring to keep it white.
- Using acrylic chocolate molds, pour a layer of white chocolate into each mold and gently tap to remove air bubbles.
- Pour the pink chocolate on top, ensuring it forms a shell by allowing the excess chocolate to drip out.
- In a saucepan, combine water, sugar, liquid glucose, and raspberries. Cook the mixture until it thickens.
- Once thickened, add cornflour and mix well. Let the raspberry mixture cook for an additional 2 minutes.
- After the raspberry filling cools down, spoon it into the chocolate shells.
- Seal the bonbons by adding another layer of pink chocolate over the raspberry filling.
- Allow the bonbons to set completely before demolding.

Pastry Chef, Amit Kumar Patra, Hilton Bangalore Embassy Golflinks



All you need to know about...

2 emergency care skills

How to do CPR

Cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is a life-saving technique that can help in saving lives in case of a heart attack or drowning situation. Please note: never jeopardise anyone's safety if you are not sure of performing this skill. Immediately call the hospital and police, and alert people. Here are some basic things to know:

For people who become unconscious suddenly, it is important to check the level of consciousness by gently tapping on both shoulders.

If the person does not respond, immediately call for help and check the pulse by touching the neck just beside the wind pipe.

Simultaneously look at signs of breathing by observing the chest (it should rise for less than 10 seconds).

In case the pulse is absent, and you notice no breathing efforts, which confirms a cardiac arrest situation, chest compressions should be started by placing hands (palms down) on the centre of the chest.

Make sure to keep the elbows straight and position your shoulders directly above your hands.

Important Tip: The rate of compression should be 100-120 per minute; give two breaths to the affected person after every 30 compressions till help arrives.

In case of electric shocks

Here's what to do if someone suffers high voltage shocks due to coming in contact with a power source:

It is ideal to immediately turn off the source of electricity. If not, move the person away from source using a dry, non-conducting object made of cardboard, plastic or wood.

Once the victim is moved away, begin CPR if the victim shows no signs of consciousness, breathing or circulation.

Cover the burn area with a clean cloth or sterile gauze and seek medical help immediately.

Important: Do not attempt to touch the victim directly.

— Dr Mohammed Shakeel for Femina

STAR RISE

A look into upward trajectory of Yami's career

Yami Gautam Dhar has carved a notable niche for herself in Bollywood. While many actresses find themselves confined to traditional "heroine" roles, Yami has broken through by taking the lead in powerful, narrative-driven films. Since her debut with the critically and commercially successful Vicky Donor in 2012, she has showcased her knack for portraying complex and layered characters.

Her filmography includes titles such as A Thursday, Uri: The Surgical Strike, Lost, Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga, OMG 2, and Article 370. Her role in A Thursday, playing a school teacher with a dark agenda, marked a turning point, gripping audiences and highlighting her ability to anchor intense stories. She continued to showcase her talent in Lost, playing a determined journalist unravelling a mystery. The success of Article 370, a socio-political drama, further solidified her status as a versatile and reliable performer.

Yami's ability to drive projects defines this phase of her career. She has consistently built an impressive collection of films where she takes center stage, reflecting a commitment to meaningful cinema. This has made her a favorite among audiences who crave thought-provoking narratives. She has evolved from being cast in more ornamental roles to becoming a creative powerhouse, delivering films that achieve both critical acclaim and commercial success.

With several promising projects in the pipeline, Yami is contributing to a shift, proving that female actors can not only draw audiences but also redefine success in Indian cinema. This chapter in her career is a testament to her talent and a positive step for the industry at large. **—Purva Joshi, Femina**

Benedict Cumberbatch in place of Tom Hardy in 'Blood on Snow'

Actor Benedict Cumberbatch is joining Aaron Taylor-Johnson in 'Blood on Snow', an indie adaptation of the Jo Nesbo crime thriller directed by Cary Fukunaga, as per The Hollywood Reporter.

Eva Green, Emma Laird and Ben Mendelsohn are also part of the cast.

Cumberbatch replaces Tom Hardy, who was originally scheduled to appear and produce but backed down owing to scheduling conflicts. The feature film will begin production at the end of the month and will be shot in Latvia.

Taylor-Johnson plays Olav, a hitman/fixer hired by his mob boss to assassinate the man's adulterous wife. When Olav convinces himself that he has fallen in love with his wife and does not kill her, a series of tragic events unfolds, threatening a brutal mob war, as per the outlet.

Cumberbatch plays a rival mob boss named the Fisherman. However, few details are available about the characters, as per The Hollywood Reporter. Nesbo wrote the script with Ben Powers.

Mike Larocca and Michael Schaefer of Department M, which is also fully financing the feature, are producing. Fukunaga, Nesbo, Tracey Seaward, Niclas Salomonsson, and Dean Baker are also producing, as per the outlet. Cumberbatch starred in a Netflix miniseries titled Eric last year and is part of the all-star ensemble of the latest Guy Ritchie project, Wife and Dog.

Green recently starred in the action flick Dirty Angels, directed by Martin Campbell, and was part of the ensemble of a two-part French adaptation of The Three Musketeers, as per The Hollywood Reporter. **—ANI**

Radhika wishes her forever Valentine

One of the most adored couples in Sandalwood, Yash, and Radhika Pandit continue to shell relationship goals. The lovebirds recently took to their Instagram handles and dropped some adorable pictures, posing amidst nature.

"I was told it was our 15th Valentine's together... I heard forever! Happy VDay, my forever Valentine", Yash and Radhika Pandit captioned the post.

For the unversed, the couple first met on the sets of the 2004 Kannada Television show "Nandagokul". While the actress tried to talk to him during the shoot, she found him to have a lot of attitude. However, these two eventually became friends and even went on to work together on many more projects, such as "Moggina Manasu", "Mr and Mrs Ramachari", and, "Santhu Straight Forward".

Soon their friendship transformed into love, and the couple started dating each other. Yash and Radhika Pandit finally tied the knot on December 9, 2016. They are now proud parents of two kids, a young girl Ayra, and a boy named Yatharv.

On the work front, Yash is presently occupied with his much-anticipated drama "Toxic". Featuring Kiara Advani and Nayanthara in significant roles, it is touted to be a pan-world film made in Kannada and English. **—IANS**

Sunny celebrates twins' birthday

As her sons Noah and Asher turned seven, actress Sunny Leone penned a heartfelt note for her twin boys, calling them the light of her day.

Sunny took to Instagram, where she shared a family picture from the birthday celebrations. The picture featured Sunny posing with her husband Daniel Weber, their daughter Nisha, Noah and Asher. The photograph also had some family friends posing along.

"Happy Birthday to my baby boys @ashersweber11 & @noahsinghweber11 you two are the light of my day and always my happy smiling boys!! Happy 7th Birthday!!" she wrote as the caption.

Sunny, whose real name is Karenjit Kaur Vohra, married Daniel in 2011. In 2017, the couple adopted their first child from Latur,a baby girl, whom they named Nisha Kaur Weber, who was 21 months old at the time of adoption.

In 2018, she and her husband announced the birth of their twin boys, born through surrogacy. **—IANS**

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Gaganyaan now in 2028: Trip to space will have to wait

Total 8 missions instead of initially planned 3

Sridhar.Vivan@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @sridharVMIRROR

India's ambitious Gaganyaan programme, which aims to send humans to space, has been deferred to 2028. There is also a revised scope that includes a total of eight missions instead of the originally planned three. In a recent Rajya Sabha session, Union Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Dr Jitendra Singh, confirmed the changes, citing a broader vision for India's space program.

"Against the original plan of undertaking three missions (one crewed and two uncrewed), the programme has been expanded to validate various technologies for Gaganyaan and to support the development of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS). A total of eight missions—two crewed and six uncrewed—will now be conducted in a phased manner by 2028," Dr Singh stated.

The TV-D1 module of Gaganyaan lifts off from Sriharikota (File photo)

To accommodate these changes, the financial allocation for the Gaganyaan programme has been increased to ₹20,193 crore. This funding will address new technological requirements, precursor missions, and additional developments needed to meet the revised objectives.

Dr Jitendra Singh outlined several reasons for the delay in India's first crewed Gaganyaan mission. He said that one of the primary factors was the COVID-19 pandemic (March 2020 to March 2022), which caused severe disruptions in the supply chain and slowed down the production of avionics components. The industry operated at a reduced pace, and supply chain breakdowns led to irregular deliveries of raw materials, affecting the timely realization of critical hardware. Additionally, a global shortage of space-grade and electronic components (EEE) further delayed the production and integration of essential mission hardware.

He highlighted that the need for additional validation missions and crew safety tests, was yet another factor that caused the delay. Ensuring the highest levels of safety for astronauts required further testing and enhancements, leading to an extension in the timeline.

"Moreover, the design of the orbital module had to undergo revisions to keep its overall mass within the lifting capacity of the HLVM3 launcher, adding to the complexity and delay. The development of the life support system, a crucial technology for human spaceflight, also contributed to the postponement. Since this was an indigenous effort, it required extensive research and testing. Procuring such technology externally was not feasible, which extended the development cycle," he said.

Moon landing in 2040

India has set its sights on a Moon landing by 2040, as part of its broader Space Vision 2047. To achieve this goal, the government has approved two crucial lunar missions, Chandrayaan-4 and Chandrayaan-5 (LuPEX), which will help demonstrate key technologies required for future human spaceflight to the Moon.

Dr Singh, in the parliament, said that Chandrayaan-4 will serve as a foundational mission, focusing on validating critical technologies essential for a crewed lunar landing. The mission will aim to achieve a safe and soft landing on the Moon's surface, collect and containerize lunar samples, and successfully execute an ascent from the Moon. "It will also demonstrate docking and undocking maneuvers in lunar orbit, ensuring the seamless transfer of samples between spacecraft modules. Chandrayaan-4 will test the safe return of samples to Earth, enabling in-depth analysis beyond what previous lander and rover missions could accomplish," he said.

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I, Suhas Wuppala s/o Satyanarayana Murthy W, R/o 1-A G/F Sapthagruha Apts 16th Cross Malleshwaram B'luru-560003 have changed my name to Vivan Giri Wuppala vide affidavit dt: 15/02/2025 B S Padmaprasad.

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I, Krishna Kumar saratKumar R/o Kavya 23 Dream Meadows, Brookefields, Kundalahalli B'luru-560037 have changed my daughter name from Saranyaa to Saranyaa Krishna Kumar.

I, L Merina Thamari Vathana W/o R Yuwaraja R/o #old No-7 New No-11, th Cross Eshwara layout, LBS Nagar B'lore-560038 have changed my name to L Merina Thamarai Vathana

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Jayalalithaa's valuables handed over to TN govt

Former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa's long-seized valuables have finally been handed over to the Tamil Nadu government. These items, including gold jewellery, silk sarees, electronic appliances, and property documents, were confiscated in the disproportionate assets case.

The handover took place at the CCH Court in Hall-34 under tight security. The special court, which had earlier seized these assets, directed that they be officially transferred to the Tamil Nadu government. The process was carried out in the presence of the Tamil Nadu Vigilance Officer.

Among the items returned were 11,344 silk sarees, 10 televisions, 12 refrigerators, eight VCRs, one video camera, four CD players, two audio decks, 24 tape recorders, 1,040 video cassettes, and five iron lockers. Additionally, 27 kg of gold and diamonds, estimated to be worth ₹300-350 crore, were also handed over.

The Tamil Nadu government also received property documents for 1,526 acres of land and seized buses. Other valuable possessions such as a gold sword, a golden statue of Jayalalithaa, a crown, gold watches, pens, and jewellery were included in the transfer.

Jayalalithaa's belongings were transported from Bengaluru to Tamil Nadu under the supervision of senior police officials, ensuring strict security. The return of these assets marks a significant moment in the long-standing legal proceedings surrounding the late leader's wealth. —BMB

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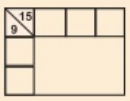
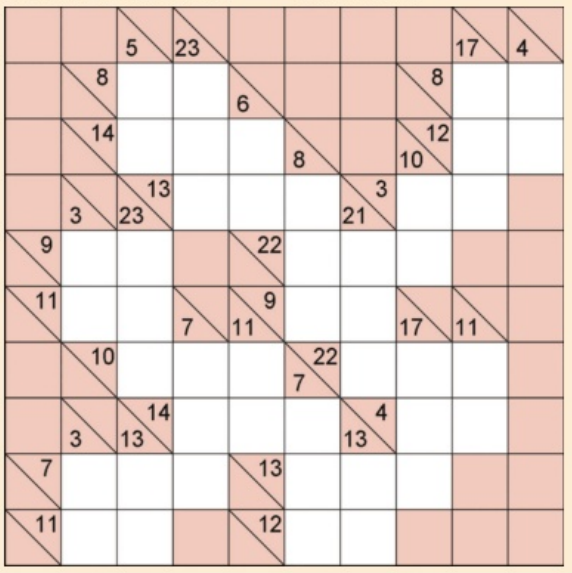
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

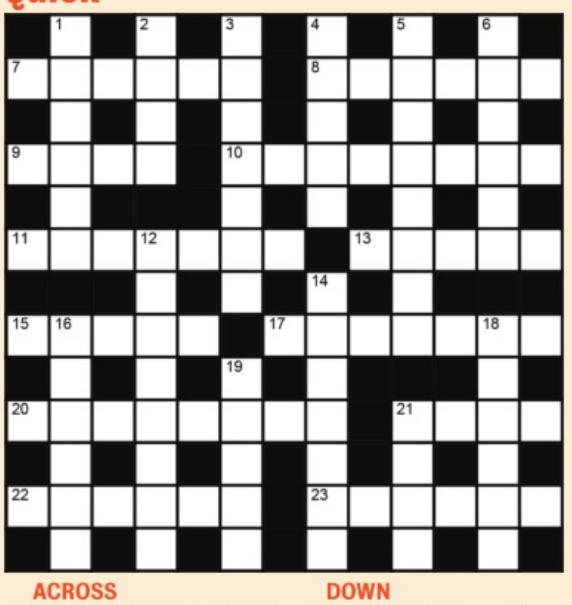


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Former Zimbabwe President Robert ____ (6)
8 A marine barker! (6)
9 The first murder victim (4)
10 Indian mountain range (8)
11 Between the devil and the ___ ___ : in a dilemma? (4,3)
13 Show one knows (3,2)
15 Black wood (5)
17 Maybe (7)
20 Comical imitations, travesties (8)
21 Hindu god of fire (4)
22 To amuse (6)
23 Guffaws (6)

DOWN

1 Ace spinner Anil ___ (6)
2 ___ a cab : call a taxi? (4)
3 Does the road work all over again (7)
4 Customary (5)
5 Biblical town in Israel (8)
6 The Alchemist author (6)
12 Funds for incidental expenses (3-5)
14 Brutish or feral (7)
16 South American country (6)
18 Curry containing pork (6)
19 Young domestic cat (5)
21 ___ Lal: Cricket commentator (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: V EQUALS G

QTQCD HBHQIF BL BIQ'P QGJPFQIKQ BIQ JP VCBMJIV JIFB HBCQ BC CQFCQSFJIV JIFB EQPP.

Linemaro

You look smashing in your jeans

Mindchow

When difficulties are overcome, they begin blessing

Joke of the day

Facebook is a great thing. I have friends all over the world. None in this country, but many all over the world

Loop

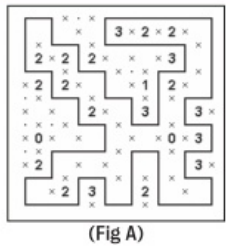
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

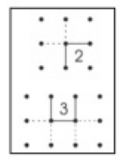
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

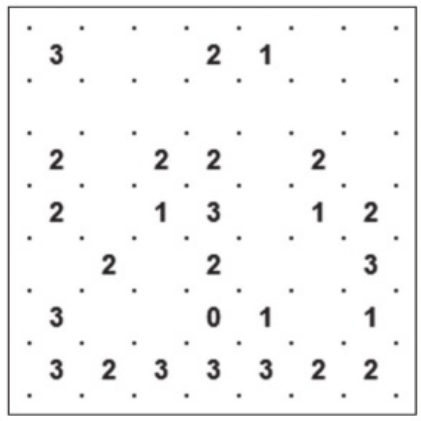
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



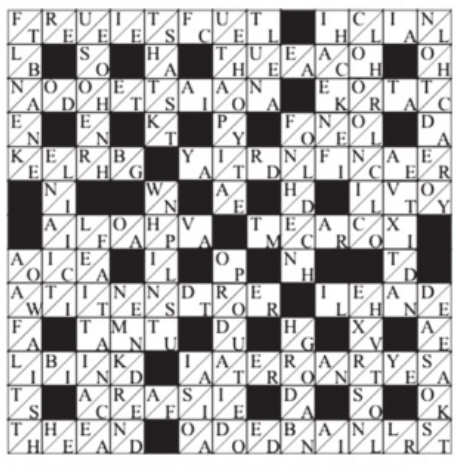
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



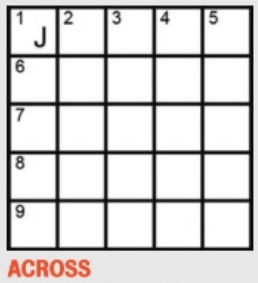
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

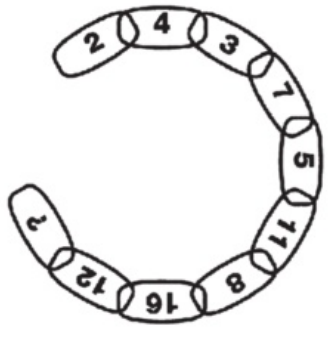
1 At job; 6 O Mage; 7 Mud in; 8 Is eve; 9 Art we

DOWN

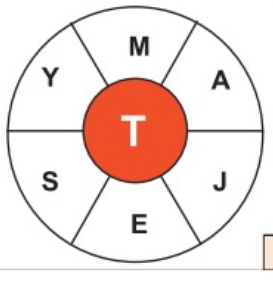
1 Jot us; 2 Amain; 3 Dweeb; 4 Go vie; 5 Mater

Mensapuzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the chain?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

13 Average; 15 Good; 17 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	5		4	1	7		2	
	1						9	
6								4
		2	5		3	9		
	4	8	2		6	5	7	
		7	8		1	6		
4								7
	7						5	
	8		7	5	4		6	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 1
3 6 6 8

Medium = 24
3 3 5 9

Hard = 16
1 4 8 2

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Woman's arm is moved. 2. Apron bow is smaller. 3. Flower is upside down. 4. Bottom of shirt is different. 5. Neckline is different. 6. Cap is turned around.

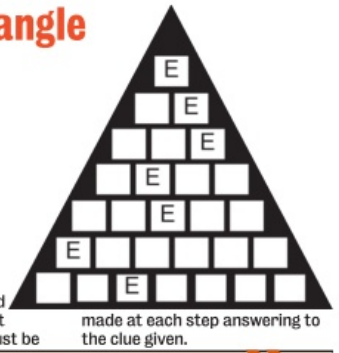
Riddler

In each sentence below, two words are incomplete. The two words end in the same three letters, so they look like they should rhyme, but they don't. See if you can figure out the missing letters in each sentence.

1. When God speaks, it is a w___ from the L___.
2. After the fl___, Noah disembarked and st___ on Mount Ararat.

Alpha triangle

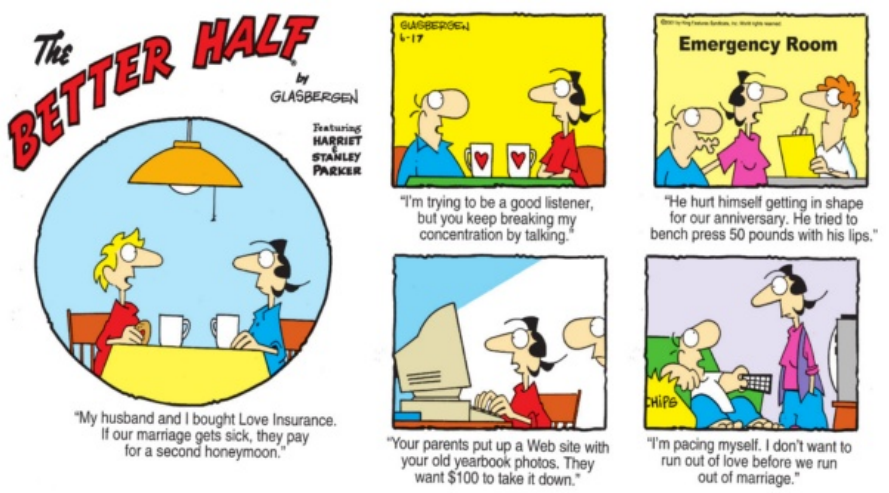
1 Second vowel
2 That man
3 Article
4 Rich man's title
5 Pane
6 Biblical queen
7 Sanctuary



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
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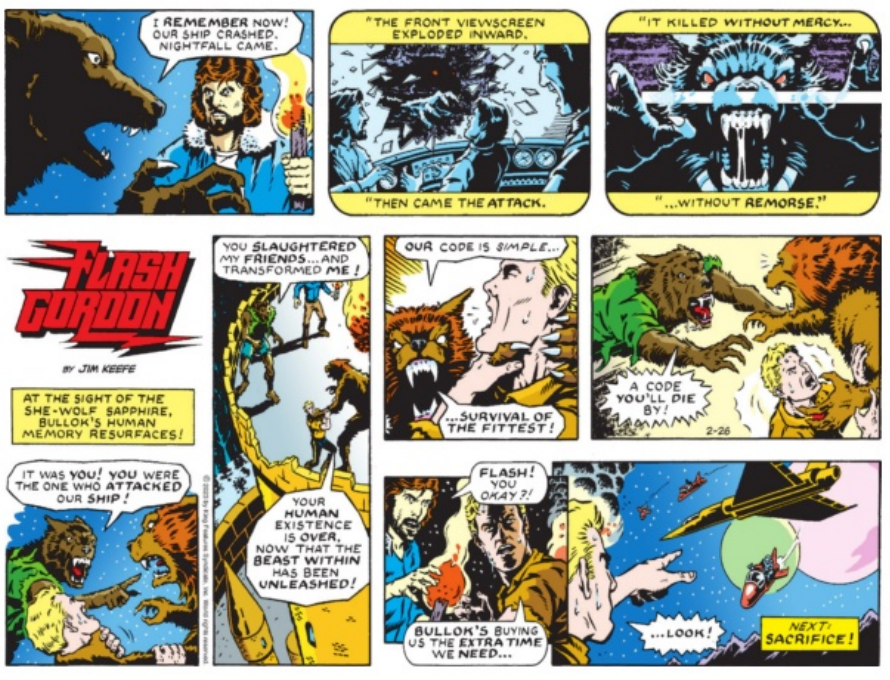
"My husband and I bought Love Insurance. If our marriage gets sick, they pay for a second honeymoon."
GLASBERGEN 4-17
"I'm trying to be a good listener, but you keep breaking my concentration by talking."
Emergency Room
"He hurt himself getting in shape for our anniversary. He tried to bench press 50 pounds with his lips."
"Your parents put up a Web site with your old yearbook photos. They want $100 to take it down."
CHIPS
"I'm pacing myself. I don't want to run out of love before we run out of marriage."

BABY BLUES™
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
WHAT'S ON THE SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEKEND?
NOTHING.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "NOTHING"?
NO GAMES, NO PRACTICES, NO RECITALS, NO SLEEPOVERS.
WE HAVE TWO WHOLE DAYS WITH ZERO OBLIGATIONS.
I ACTUALLY FEEL MYSELF COMING ALIVE AGAIN!
SO, IT'S A GOOD TIME TO PAINT THE HALLWAY.


I REMEMBER NOW! OUR SHIP CRASHED. NIGHTFALL CAME.
"THE FRONT VIEWSCREEN EXPLODED INWARD.
"THEN CAME THE ATTACK.
"IT KILLED WITHOUT MERCY...
"...WITHOUT REMORSE."
FLASH GORDON
by JIM KEEFE
AT THE SIGHT OF THE SHE-WOLF SAPPHIRE, BULLOK'S HUMAN MEMORY RESURFACES!
IT WAS YOU! YOU WERE THE ONE WHO ATTACKED OUR SHIP!
YOU SLAUGHTERED MY FRIENDS...AND TRANSFORMED ME!
YOUR HUMAN EXISTENCE IS OVER, NOW THAT THE BEAST WITHIN HAS BEEN UNLEASHED!
OUR CODE IS SIMPLE...
...SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST!
A CODE YOU'LL DIE BY! MMMM
2-26
FLASH! YOU OKAY?!
BULLOK'S BUYING US THE EXTRA TIME WE NEED...
...LOOK!
NEXT: SACRIFICE!

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you might feel unhappy and sluggish, which could impact your work efficiency. Delays in projects may affect your professional and personal reputation. Avoid adventurous trips or reckless driving. Lovebirds might face a breakup, and job seekers might experience disappointment.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Positive vibrations surround you today, and things feel under control. You may plan to start a new business in partnership or embark on long-distance travel. Strengthening trust with your spouse will bring harmony to your domestic life.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
You would perform at your best in the office today. A strong rapport with your boss may lead to new responsibilities or even a promotion. Chronic health issues may improve, and financial incentives for your hard work are likely. Disputes with siblings could be resolved, and job seekers might find new opportunities.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Challenges may arise today, but seeking advice from elders can help you navigate them. Patience is the key. Concerns over your children's education may trouble you, possibly leading to a short trip for academic purposes. Investors shall avoid speculative investments.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Dissatisfaction may linger today, as your hard work may not yield expected results. Read documents carefully before signing any contracts, and trust your intuition before investing in fixed assets.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
You may be busy with social gatherings and family events, expanding your network. A work-related short trip is possible. Disputes with siblings could be resolved, and your subordinates will support you in completing a challenging project. Confidence will be high, but patience is advised when dealing with others.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Family gatherings would keep you engaged today. Your polite demeanor will enhance your image among friends and relatives. Spending on artifacts or luxury items may improve your social status, and good news from a close relative may brighten your day.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Happiness surrounds you today, making work enjoyable. Your vitality will help you make difficult decisions that lead to future profits. A short work-related trip is likely. Support from colleagues and subordinates will ensure timely task completion. Students will be more focused, but controlling eating habits is advised to avoid stomach issues.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
You may feel mentally and physically drained today, possibly due to sleeplessness. Family health concerns may trouble you, and unnecessary expenses could impact your savings. Be cautious of conspiracies and remain vigilant around opponents.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Your day starts with happiness and positivity. Quick decision-making at work may lead to financial gains. A new source of income could boost your savings. Investing in business with your partner may prove profitable, and harmony in your domestic life will strengthen.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
You may be preoccupied with work, leading to less time for family. However, elders' blessings may bring professional growth, including promotions for managers. Rewards and recognition will elevate your status, and your professional performance will be strong.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Happiness and patience will shine through in your work today, leading to efficient task completion. A visit to a religious place or a charitable act may bring inner peace. Lovebirds will strengthen trust in their relationship, and you will successfully keep opponents at bay.

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
45/5 = 9! = 362,880

QUOTE UNCODE
Every moment of one's existence is growing into more or retreating into less.

RIDDLER
1. word Lord &
2. flood stood

FAST FIVE

T	A	W	E	R
U	N	D	I	M
S	I	E	V	E
S	A	O	K	
O	M	E	G	A

BULL'S EYE east, jest, jetsam, yeast, MAJESTY, mast, mate, meat, meaty, seat, seat, stay, steam, steamy, stem, tame, team,

STRIKE OUT

H	E	E	D		O	D	D	B	A	L	L	S		

QUICK

K	H	R	U	N	C									

MENSA PUZZLE
22. There are two repeated sequences in the circle. Starting with the first segment and moving clockwise, add 1 to the first number, then 2, 3, and 4, writing the results in alternate segments. Starting with the second segment, add 3 to this number, then 4, 5 and 6, writing these results in the alternate segments left.

SUDOKU

9	8	1	7	5	4	2	6	3
2	7	6	1	3	8	4	5	9
4	3	5	6	2	9	1	8	7
5	9	7	8	4	1	6	3	2
3	4	8	2	9	6	5	7	1
1	6	2	5	7	3	9	4	8
6	2	3	9	8	5	7	1	4
7	1	4	3	6	2	8	9	5
8	5	9	4	1	7	3	2	6

ALPHA TRIANGLE
E, He, The, Seth, Sheet, Esther, Shelter.

GO FIGURE
Easy
6 – 3 + 6 – 8 = 1
Medium
9 \ 3 + 5 x 3 = 24
Hard
4 – 2 x 8 x 1 = 16

LOOP

KAKURO

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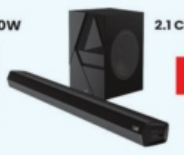

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